Humble, C.G., Samet, J.M. and Pathak, D.R., "Marriage to a Smoker and Lung Cancer Risk," American Journal of Public Health 77(5): 598-602, 1987.

In this case-control study, 609 lung cancer cases (including 28 lifelong nonsmokers) were matched with 781 controls. Cases were identified using the New Mexico Tumor Registry; controls were chosen via random sampling methods, and were frequency-matched on sex, ethnicity and age (10-yr group). Of the 28 nonsmoking cases, histopathological review was conducted for only 17, and nine of those 17 differed from the Tumor Registry's conclusion. Surrogate respondents were used for 52.4% of the cases overall, and 19 of the 28 neversmokers. Regarding ETS, questions were asked about spousal smoking only. Additional questions were asked about spouse's employment and on-the-job exposures to arsenic, asbestos, lead, pesticides, and radiation.

The authors report a three-fold increase in lung cancer risk for all nonsmokers (males and females combined) whose spouses smoked cigarettes, regardless of adjustments for ethnicity (OR = 3.2, 90% CI 1.5-7.2) or age (OR = 3.2, 90% CI 1.5-7.3). The sample was too small to allow simultaneous adjustment for ethnicity and age. For females only, the OR for spousal smoking of cigarettes only was 1.8 (90% CI 0.6-5.4). The authors claimed that their data supported increasing risk with duration of exposure to a smoking spouse, but not with increasing number of cigarettes smoked per day by the spouse.

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